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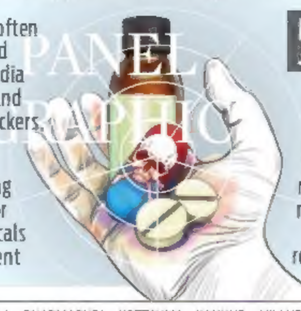
INDIA NAMED IN U.S. DRUG REPORT

The 2025 Annual Threat Assessment of US Intelligence Community claims China and India directly and indirectly supply materials to drug traffickers targeting US

- Non-state groups are often enabled, both directly and indirectly by China and India as sources of precursors and equipment for drug traffickers, the report claims | P9
- Says India, China among primary source nations for fentanyl precursor chemicals and pill pressing equipment



52,000

Opioid deaths were caused by cartels, which also facilitated nearly 3M illegal migrant arrivals, straining US resources in 2024

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Apex court stays totally insensitive Allahabad HC remark

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the Allahabad High Court's recent observations on the grabbing of a minor girl's breasts and pulling the drawstrings of her "pyjama" not amounting to an attempt to rape and said it reflected total "insensitivity" and "inhuman approach". Taking strong exception to the HC's observations, the court termed it a "very serious matter".

'STRICT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN AGAINST JUDGE'

The National Federation of Indian Women demanded action against Allahabad HC Justice Ram Manohar Narayan Mishra over his controversial observations. It demanded gender sensitivity training for judges

The court took *suo motu* cognisance of the matter after "We the Women of India" collective wrote to Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna.

Accused Pawan and Akash allegedly grabbed the breasts of an 11-year-old girl in the Kasganj district of UP. Thereafter, one of them broke the string of her pyjama while trying to pull it down, attempted to drag her beneath a culvert and allegedly tried to rape her. But due to the intervention of passers-by, they couldn't proceed.

"It is a very serious matter," Justice Gavai said, "exhibiting total insensitiveness on the part of the judge."

NEW ARMY DIVISION TO DEFEND EASTERN LADAKH

Major redeployment of troops; New division to boost strategic deterrence

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

THE Indian Army is in the process of raising a division-level formation to be permanently positioned in the sensitive Eastern Ladakh area, sources told this newspaper. This will be in addition to the 3 Division, which is responsible for the entire Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Terming it a major re-ORBAT move, sources said the new formation will be called 72 Division. ORBAT means 'order of battle' and Re-ORBAT is reorganising and redeployment of existing troops.

In the Army, a division comprises 10,000-15,000 combat troops and 8,000 support elements, commanded by a Major General, and made up of 3 to 4 brigades. A brigade has a troop size of 3,500-4,000 with a Brigadier as commander.

"The headquarters are being raised; one Brigade headquarter is already deployed in Eastern Ladakh and has begun functioning," sources said. The larger elements of the formation are being trained in the western parts of the country "to synchronise the personnel, equipment and organisation as per specific tasking," sources added.

72 DIVISION TO GUARD LADAKH

The new permanent Army division being raised in Eastern Ladakh under the Northern Command is called 72 Division. This is in addition to the 3 Division, responsible for entire LAC

The 72 Division will be permanently placed under the Leh-based 14 Fire & Fury Corps, which was raised in September 1999 after the Kargil war. The Corps handles some of the most sensitive frontiers and battlefields in the world.

The area that will be under the control of the 72 Division is currently being taken care of by the counter insurgency wing called 'Uniform Force'. Its elements, in lesser numbers, were moved as an ad-hoc arrangement to fill the gap. The Uniform Force will soon move back to its old location in Reasi, Jammu Division.

The Army's decision to raise a permanent division in East Ladakh is important as the situation along the 832-km LAC remains sensitive, which calls for constant vigil and strategic preparedness.

A standoff took place between Chinese and Indian troops in May 2020 at Finger-4 near Pangong Lake, followed by a deadly clash in June in Galwan valley. After several rounds of talks, Indian and Chinese troops completed their disengagement in the Depsang and Demchok areas of Ladakh in October last year, following which patrolling resumed. However, the troops from both sides remain in the vicinity of the LAC.

EXPRESS READ

Not allowed to speak in Lok Sabha, says Rahul

NEW DELHI: Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday claimed he was not allowed to speak in Parliament after Speaker Om Birla made "unsubstantiated" remarks about him. He also accused the Speaker of running the House in an "undemocratic manner" | P10

BMTC bus runs over two men on Old Airport Road

BENGALURU: Two men were run over by a BMTC bus at the Murugeshpalya signal on Old Airport Road around 10pm Wednesday. They were dragged for over 50 metres. The bus driver and conductor panicked, parked the bus in the middle of the road with passengers, and fled the scene, said eyewitnesses | P3

Expelled from BJP, Yatnal says will combat dynastic politics

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

BJP's Central Disciplinary Committee has expelled former Union minister and senior legislator Basanagouda Patil Yatnal from the party's primary membership for six years.

In a note to Yatnal, the committee stated that the party considered his response to the show cause notice issued to him on February 10 and took serious note of his repeated violation of the party's code of conduct, despite his promise to respect and honour the code. "It has accordingly been decided to expel you for a period of six years with immediate effect from the primary membership of the party and you stand removed from any party position that you may have held until now," Om Pathak, member-secretary, CDC, stated.

Yatnal has been issuing statements against BJP state president BY Vijayendra and former CM BS Yediyurappa, embarrassing the party as well as its senior leaders. CONTINUED ON P4